

# The Heuristic Role of Sewall Wright's 1932 Adaptive Landscape Diagram

Skipper, Robert (2004) The Heuristic Role of Sewall Wright's 1932 Adaptive Landscape Diagram. In [2002] *Philosophy of Science Assoc. 18th Biennial Mtg - PSA 2002: Contributed Papers (Milwaukee, WI; 2002): PSA 2002 Symposia*.

Full text available as:

[PDF](#) - Requires a viewer, such as [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) or other PDF viewer.

## Abstract

Sewall Wright's adaptive landscape is the most influential heuristic in evolutionary biology. Wright's biographer, Provine, criticized Wright's adaptive landscape, claiming that its heuristic value is dubious because of deep flaws. Ruse has defended Wright against Provine. Ruse claims Provine has not shown Wright's use of the landscape is flawed, and that, even if it were, it is heuristically valuable. I argue that both Provine's and Ruse's analyses of the adaptive landscape are defective and suggest a more adequate understanding of it.

**Keywords:** Wright, Provine, Ruse, adaptive landscape, heuristic, shifting balance theory

**Subjects:** [Specific Sciences: Biology: Evolutionary Theory](#)

**Conferences and Volumes:** [\[2002\] Philosophy of Science Assoc. 18th Biennial Mtg - PSA 2002: Contributed Papers \(Milwaukee, WI; 2002\): PSA 2002 Symposia](#)

**ID Code:** 1746

**Deposited By:** [Skipper, Robert](#)

**Deposited On:** 10 May 2004